

Legislation Text

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Commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the United States' entry into World War I on April 6, 1917, and honoring the sacrifices of Philadelphia's soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines and civilians

WHEREAS, Archduke Ferdinand of Austria was assassinated on June 28, 1914, setting in motion a series of events through complicated treaty relationships that led to the First World War, also known as "The Great War" and "The War to End All Wars"; and

WHEREAS, At the outbreak of World War I, President Woodrow Wilson pledged neutrality for the United States, a position supported by The Public. That changed in 1917, when Germany engaged in unrestricted submarine warfare, sinking United States merchant ships and otherwise causing loss of American citizens' lives; and the Zimmermann Telegram was leaked revealing German overtures to Mexico against the United States; and

WHEREAS, On April 2, 1917, President Wilson requested a Declaration of War against Germany. On April 4th, the Senate voted to support the measure. On April 6th, the House concurred, and the United States officially entered World War I; and

WHEREAS, When the War ended on November 11, 1918, more than two million United States Service Members had joined the fighting, and over 50,000 of them lost their lives; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia was known as the "Workshop of the World" at the time. Companies including Baldwin Locomotive; Midvale Steel and Ordnance Company; the Smith, Kline, and French Company; the Brill Company; the Budd Company; the Frankford and Schuylkill Arsenal; the Hog Island Ship Yard; the rifle and ammunition plants at Eddystone; the Philadelphia Base Hospital Units; and many more Philadelphia businesses; provided massive quantities of goods for the war effort; and

WHEREAS, The following Philadelphia-based units served with distinction in the American Expeditionary Forces: the 28th Division, the 312th Field Artillery, the 304th Engineers, the 314th Infantry, and the 315th Infantry. More than 3,000 Philadelphians died by the War's end; and

WHEREAS, On March 15, 1919, Members of the American Expeditionary Force convened in Paris for the first American Legion Caucus that resulted in Congress chartering "The American Legion" in 1919, which is now the nation's largest veterans' service organization; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby commemorate the 100th Anniversary of The United States' entry into World War I on April 6, 1917, and honor the sacrifices of Philadelphia's soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines and civilians.

RESOLVED FURTHER, That Engrossed copies of this resolution be presented to The American Legion and the United Veterans Council of Philadelphia, evidencing the solemn respect of this legislative body.

